

France after the Attacks in Paris: Defend the Muslim People against Imperialist Wars, Chauvinist Hatemongering, and State Repression!

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 9.1.2015

1. On 7 January, jihadist militants attacked the headquarters of the journal *Charlie Hebdo* and, after separating men and women, killed 12 men including the editor-in-chief, journalists, and policemen. The following day, another person shot at cops and killed two people. At the same time, several mosques were attacked by gunshots and bombs. 88.000 police across the country have been mobilized to hunt the jihadist militants. The social-democratic and liberal Hollande government, supported by the Communist Party and the *Front de Gauche* as well as the bourgeois media, is attempting to place the country in a state of emergency. In this way they hope to utilize the attack against *Charlie Hebdo* as a pretext to mobilize support for their reactionary imperialist policy.

2. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) opposes individual terrorist attacks such as the one against the journal *Charlie Hebdo*. We do so *not* because we have any sympathy for this journal and its leading figures. For a number of years, *Charlie Hebdo* has supported the imperialist crusade against the Muslim peoples by publishing disgusting and humiliating cartoons against the prophet Mohammed and Muslims. With these actions it gave ideological support to the French imperialist war drive which, since 2001, has been manifested in France's official participation in the invasion and occupation

of Afghanistan which led to the deaths of tens of thousands of civilians. The newspaper equally contributed to the ideological climate which justified the military invasions of French imperialism in Mali and the Central African Republic, as well as its participation in Obama's latest crusade in Iraq and Syria. In short, *Charlie Hebdo* is a prime example of the cynical and arrogant Western liberalism which is thoroughly pro-imperialist, chauvinistic, and counter-revolutionary. We completely reject the liberal hypocrisys which maintains that the attack on *Charlie Hebdo* was an attack against the "free press" and the "liberal values of the West." There is nothing progressive or freedom-loving in giving support to the occupation, terrorizing, racism and humiliation of other people!

3. No, socialists should oppose the attack against journal *Charlie Hebdo* because such attacks are entirely counter-productive. They are not directed against military targets and they are useless for joint mass mobilizations of Muslim and non-Muslim workers and youth. Quite the opposite, they rather serve as a pretext for the imperialist government to mobilize the armed-state apparatus, to create a climate of public support for anti-Muslim terrorist attacks and imperialist wars, and to restrict the democratic rights and increase the surveillance of Muslim migrants and all progressive forces.



The RCIT has sections in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Israel/Occupied Palestine, USA, and Austria. In addition the RCIT is collaborating with the Blog vansterparlan.v-blog.se (Sweden) and socialists in Yemen.

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4. We at the RCIT maintain that the task of socialists now is to oppose the pro-imperialist mobilizations taking place in France. Socialists rather should defend Muslim migrants and mobilize against the imperialist war drive of the Hollande government and the EU. Socialists have to state clearly that the main enemy is not the reactionary jihadists but French imperialism and the Hollande government. It is French imperialism which brings death and destruction to Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Mali, and the CAR. It is French imperialism which is currently threatening to launch air strikes against Libya. It is French imperialism which creates the conditions of oppression and super-exploitation of its Muslim migrants. It is French imperialism which prohibits Muslim girls from wearing the *hijab* in schools and which outlawed the wearing of the *burka* in public. It is the Hollande government which maintains close political and business connections with the Israeli Apartheid state, even as it was slaughtering more than 2,300 Palestinians in Gaza during the summer of 2014. In addition, the Hollande government demonstrated its pro-Zionist character by outlawing pro-Palestinian demonstrations during that war – a uniquely reactionary act of repression in the Europe of today. In short, those liberals who are tearing out their hair should not be surprised that the French state and the media establishment have become a despised and hated symbol among hundreds of millions of people from the South.

5. A chief task for socialists in France and Europe now is to organize self-defense units in order to defend mosques and migrant districts against chauvinist attacks. It is equally urgent to build a broad united front against the anti-Muslim chauvinism. Finally, it is urgent to build a strong anti-war movement against the spreading imperialist war drive in the Middle East and in Africa.

6. The RCIT severely condemns the French Communist Party (PCF) and many other so-called “leftist” groups for their support of Hollande’s pro-imperialist call for “*national unity*.” While the centrist forces – the NPA (whose leading forces are part of the Mandelite “Fourth International”) and *Lutte Ouvrière* – in their statements of January 7 have not joined Hollande’s reactionary “*national unity*,” they both condemn the attack on *Charlie Hebdo* as an attack on “*freedom of expression*.” At the same time, they

fail to mention even in a single word the connection between this event and France’s imperialist wars against Muslim peoples, or its oppression and super-exploitation of migrants. In their statements, both of these centrist groups refer to their close relations with the journalists of *Charlie Hebdo* and thereby reveal their affiliation with the bourgeois-liberal milieu.

7. All this is not surprising, given that the PCF was part of the French government when the latter sent troops to invade Afghanistan in 2001 and that the party supports France military adventures in Africa. It is similarly characteristic of the centrist and opportunistic NPA and LO that they fail to side with the forces of resistance who are fighting against the occupation. They also did not oppose the government’s policy of outlawing the wearing of the *hijab* in French schools nor did they support the migrant uprising in late 2005.

8. Consequently, it comes as no surprise that many Muslim migrants in France don’t view these reformist and centrist parties as defenders of their democratic rights. For these reasons, an increasing number of Muslim migrants who are looking for radical alternatives are attracted to jihadist Islamism. The RCIT considers this a reactionary movement which will prove to be a dead-end for Muslim migrants. The way forward is not isolation along religious lines but mass mobilizations against the main enemy – the ruling class in France and the EU – which will unite white and migrant workers and youth. It is only through a struggle against imperialist wars, anti-democratic laws, and police oppression that international working class unity will be born. Only with such a perspective will socialists be able to defeat the influence of reactionary Islamists and to win over Muslim migrants. The RCIT appeals to socialists who share such a perspective to join forces in order to build revolutionary parties in France and internationally so that the working class can overthrow capitalism, the source of all these reactionary developments.

International Secretariat of the RCIT